

Zlat R. Milovanovic, Ilijana Petrovska:
The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and its Prospects

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Abstract

Since its creation in 2010, the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), as a part of the Bologna process, has achieved many successes on the way to the future integration of Europe as a whole in the field of higher education. Most of its 49 members have adopted and implemented reforms of higher education, having in mind sustainable development, a knowledge based society, higher employment, innovation and social cohesion. Our paper is divided into the following four parts. In the first part, we describe the future EHEA through its basic documents adopted by the Ministerial conferences of participating states, as envisioned in the Bologna declaration of 1999. The second part deals with higher education in the Republic of Macedonia – a participant of the Bologna process since 2003. The Macedonian Law on Higher Education of 2008 is consistent with the Bologna process, but deals insufficiently with higher education mobility –one of the main themes of the 2015 European Ministerial Conference in Yerevan. The third part deals with good practices in the implementation of the Bologna principles in various parts of Europe and beyond. Macedonia, like other nations needs a mobility strategy. Will Macedonia and other countries be able to have 20% of their student body spend a part of their study abroad by 2020? Only with difficulty. The question that remains is, what can be done about it? The fourth part contains some answers to the mobility conundrum by providing recommendations for the faster growth of inbound and outbound mobility. The recommendations apply to the EHEA and its member states. The methodology used includes: reviewing relevant documents; using UNESCO and EU statistics; and semi-structured interviews with Macedonian graduate students, colleagues and state officials. These are, in part, a basis of the recommendations.

Keywords: European Higher Education Area, Bologna process, higher education mobility, foreign students inbound, foreign students outbound, quality of education, higher education in Macedonia, good practices in Europe and beyond, EU exchanges of students.

The EHEA: What is it About?

The EHEA was born out of the Bologna process, in March 2010, at the Budapest-Vienna Ministerial Conference. It was proclaimed by the Ministers of Education of European countries as a wider European integration effort. Achieving the EHEA within all of Europe is the main objective of the Bologna process itself. Today, there are 49 participants (48 countries plus the European Union), and consultative members that include: the Council of Europe, UNESCO, the European University Association, and the European Students' Union. The Bologna process is to ensure more comparable, compatible and coherent systems of higher education among participants by the year 2020. We are talking about an area containing some 10,000 institutions of higher education, with about 36 million students. The EHEA represents a new model of higher education organization and, though it is not yet a completed project, it already has influence beyond Europe in other areas of the world.

The reforms of higher education within the European area cover many institutional, instructional, economic and social aspects. Recognition of national qualifications at the tertiary level has facilitated international exchanges with such achievements as the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), the Diploma Supplement (DS), the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESGQA), and the standardization of university degrees (3 + 2 + 3 or similar).

Our focus here is on international openness and mobility within the EHEA, which should create a single market in education and at the same time, increase considerably exchanges among students, faculty, researchers and administrators in Europe.

A creative, innovative and integrated Europe should find ways to implement existing agreements and declarations within Europe as a whole. The EHEA of the future should be open to all Europeans of the future without distinction – as well as to non-Europeans. The remaining barriers to study abroad should be reduced and completely removed, achieving a liberalization similar to that of world trade. The current announced goal of 40% of Europeans between the ages of the ages of 30-34 having a tertiary education is clearly, given current trends, but a first step. Borders should be wide open to those seeking or imparting knowledge across Europe. Free circulation of bona fide teachers, students, researchers and administrators should be a feature of the full autonomy of institutions of higher education. Additionally, financial incentives and arrangements should be developed to promote this. In order for

a Europe of knowledge to become a reality, the EU and individual European nations must recognize academic mobility as a key priority and provide the budgetary allocations needed to support that assessment.

At the Louvain-Louvain-la-Neuve Conference, the Ministerial Communiqué called upon higher education in Europe to “internationalize their activities and to engage in global collaboration for sustainable development” (The Communiqué of Louvain-Louvain-la-Neuve, 2009). “We believe that mobility of students, early stage researchers and staff, enhances the quality of programs and excellence in research; it strengthens academic and cultural internationalization...Mobility is important for personal development and employability, it fosters respect for diversity and capacity to deal with foreign cultures. It encourages linguistic pluralism, thus underpinning the multilingual traditions of the EHEA, and it increases cooperation and competition between higher education institutions. We call upon all countries, to increase mobility, to ensure its high quality and to diversify its types and scope.” (Communiqué of Louvain-Louvain-la-Neuve, 2009). By 2020, according to the same document, at least 20% of those graduating in the EHEA should have had a study or a training period abroad.

Opportunities for mobility should be created within all three degrees (B.A., M.A. and doctoral). Joint degrees, in partnership with two or more universities, as well as this mobility window, should become a more common practice. Among other things, states should facilitate the recognition of degrees, visa and permit issuance, the portability of grants and loans to students and faculty, a balanced flow of incoming and outgoing students, student standard infrastructure (dormitories, student restaurants, discounted travel), attractive teaching conditions for teachers from foreign countries, and the portability of retirement pensions.

At the Bucharest Ministerial Conference, three years after Louvain, the participants emphasized the “strengthening of mobility for better learning.” To quote the original document: “Learning mobility is essential to ensure the quality of higher education, enhance students’ employability and expand cross-border collaboration within the EHEA and beyond. We are adopting the strategy ‘Mobility for Better Learning’ as an addendum, including its mobility target as an integral part of our efforts to promote an element of internationalization in all higher education” (The Bucharest Ministerial Conference Communiqué, 2012). Once again, dual degrees are urged together with balanced mobility among countries, with the recording of formal and informal learning, incentives to mobility and the removal of any barriers.

According to the Ministers, international openness has a vital role to play in developing and maintaining open societies. Both internationalization and mobility will be assessed and further advanced at the Yerevan Ministerial Conference, scheduled for 2015.

In addition to Ministerial conferences and meetings dealing with EHEA, there is a Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG), which meets regularly to review the progress made and the implementation of measures taken. We should also be aware of the international agreements which have – or should have – an impact on the EHEA goals. One of the most important of these is the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European region, adopted in Lisbon on April 11, 1997 and in force since February 1, 1999. Known as the Lisbon Recognition Convention, it has been ratified by 53 nations, including some outside the EHEA. The Convention stipulates that degrees and periods of study must be recognized unless substantive differences can be proven by the receiving institution. Students and graduates are guaranteed fair procedures under this Convention. Of particular interest is also the European Cultural Convention of 1954, adopted within the Council of Europe and later accepted by most European states. It deals with the facilitation of the study of languages, history and the civilizations of member states.

Case of the Republic of Macedonia and Prospects of Mobility

The case of the Republic of Macedonia has been a full participant in the Bologna process since 2003, although some of the changes in its Higher Education Law date back to the year 2000. The Ministry of Education is in charge of the implementation of the Bologna process, with a national Bologna Follow-Up group and Coordinator. There is also a National Group for the Promotion of the Bologna Process, as well as two Inter-University Conferences of Macedonian Universities (public and private).

Most provisions of the Bologna process have found their place in the Law of Higher Education of 2008 (with amendments), and other legislation. There are about 65,000 students in the Republic of Macedonia. An excellent *Report on Higher Education in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* – prepared by the National TEMPUS Office, gives a full overview of the changes of law already implemented (Report, 2011).

An earlier report, prepared by the Ministry of Education in 2005, reported on mobility between 1996 and 2005, and placed emphasis on the

mobility of teachers and staff. In that period, 350 teachers and staff members were exchanged to and from Macedonia. In that report, the main obstacles to mobility are listed as: The high cost of education in Europe, visa and residence permits and the difference of languages from country to country.

Some exchanges have occurred between Macedonia and EU countries through such programs as the already mentioned TEMPUS program, and also Erasmus Mundus. Saints Cyril and Methodius University conducted 115 TEMPUS programs in 2007, while Saint Kliment of Ohrid University conducted 48, South East European University conducted 16 and the State University of Tetovo conducted 12. The first three universities had 62 Erasmus Mundus partnerships in 2008 and 65 in 2009 (National TEMPUS Office Report, 2011).

In 2013, the Macedonian Government established a National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility. This new Agency, gathers together non-governmental organizations and institutions of higher education, and is charged with promoting exchanges with the Erasmus + program, started on January 1, 2014. By signing the Erasmus + Charter, Macedonian institutions and organizations will have the chance to apply for and participate in various exchange programs. The Erasmus + programs have been expanded to include, in addition to education and training, youth programs and sport. Life-long education is included as well. A new EU Regulation of December 11, 2013, in Art. 24, lists the countries which can participate in the Erasmus + programs (i.e. the program countries). It includes: EU member states, EU acceding and candidate countries, EFTA states members of the EEA agreement, Switzerland under a new bilateral agreement (to be concluded), and countries covered by the European Neighborhood Policy which have concluded bilateral agreements with the EU (Regulation 1288/2013).

The new EU policy will pave the way for more collaboration and partnership between Macedonian, EU and other universities. The Macedonian Agency was certainly needed and hopefully, will coordinate international exchanges well. With a national agency, private and semi-private universities should have a better chance to participate in many more exchanges than at present. Students should be better informed about the available programs.

Otherwise, Macedonian universities already have bilateral agreements on exchanges and many international partnerships. According to 2012 UNESCO statistics, there were 5,166 Macedonian students abroad, 0.1% of the internationally (globally) mobile students in that year. The choice destination countries of Macedonian students were Bulgaria, Germany, Italy, Austria and Turkey (in that order). Then followed by Slovenia, U.S.A. (274 students),

France, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Norway, the U.K. and Albania. With 1,431 foreign students in Macedonia, the largest number came from Serbia (954), Albania (322), Bulgaria (66), Turkey (32). Fewer than ten each came from Croatia, Montenegro, Canada, Slovenia, Switzerland, Jordan, Philippines, Bangladesh and Denmark.

At the St. Cyril and Methodius University, the largest public university, 1,1% are foreign students. At South East European University (SEEU), the percentage is 1.5%, while University American College Skopje has a foreign student population of 2.2%. Among those, UACS receives a few American and Australian students who are mainly of Macedonian descent. Some of the UACS students are bi-national, counting as Macedonian. Among them, there are European citizens as well.

The number of teachers exchanged remains relatively limited. Macedonian teachers, even those who speak foreign languages well, are not likely to go to teach abroad even when a chance presents itself. Those who go, may miss promotions at their home university, are not likely to have adequate health insurance, cannot have their stay abroad count for retirement, or may have to confront higher costs of living. Foreign teachers, likewise, do not come to Macedonia easily, although they are satisfied when they come. Not unlike foreign students, they may encounter visa problems. There is no legal provision for their full time employment, pension, or healthcare. Expenses may also be a problem.

These obstacles and barriers should be overcome. Macedonia needs more foreign students and foreign teachers; it also needs more of its own going abroad. Macedonia has serious potential but it is not taking advantage of it.

The Government of Macedonia needs a strategic approach to these issues. The questions are: How will Macedonia send 20% of its university students to study or spend a part of their studies abroad? How will Macedonia send more teachers abroad? How can Macedonia employ more foreign professors? In building that kind of strategy, the Government needs to consult: universities and their representative bodies; teachers' and students' organizations; NGOs; businesses and chambers of commerce; and international organizations. A strategy on mobility and further internationalization should be developed before the Yerevan Ministerial Conference in 2015.

Best Practices to be Taken into Consideration

We refer here to the implementation of tomorrow's "Europe of knowledge", one that is highly creative and innovative. By combining the research results of researchers from European universities and research institutions, Europe can improve its global position. Combined with the European Research Area (ERA) – not covered in this paper – the EHEA can gain the edge over most other areas and be a leader in a world of technology and scientific development. There is no time to wait, Europe must compete with fast growing areas.

Back in 2007, Milovanovic proposed the creation of an International University Center for European and Balkan Studies in Skopje, which could eventually evolve into a "center of excellence" (Milovanovic, 2007). It was easier said than done. As of 2014, there is still no such center in the Balkans, although several have been established or reorganized in other places. Just a few examples include: The EU center at Jagellonian University (Krakow), European Studies center at St. Anthony's College (University of Oxford), Center for Russian, Central and East European Studies at the University of Glasgow, EU Center of Excellence-University of Pittsburgh (USA), EU Center of Excellence-University of Texas in Austin (founded in 2012) and various others. It would be wise for the Balkans to establish a similar center with a few partners.

Institutional collaboration across borders and the joint granting of degrees is another best-practice worthy of emulation and expanded implementation. The Warsaw University of Technology (WUT) Business School was created in 1991 as a joint venture of the HEC School of Management Paris, London Business School, Norwegian School of Business and Business Administration and the first WUT. It has been offering a full MBA degree in English. France and Germany established a Franco-German University in Saarbrücken in 1997, which offers a dual degree in French and German: There were 4,500 students at this University in 2007-all bilingual. In 2010/2011, a dual Ph.D. program opened at the University of Utrecht (The Netherlands) and the University of Lille (France). Its degrees are issued by both the Frans-Nederlandse Academie in Utrecht, and the Réseau Franco-Neerlandais in Lille.

Law students from Spain can spend a year at a law school in France, where they study the French legal system for a year, while French law students can do the inverse in Spain – studying the Spanish legal system. Study in France is in French and Spanish in Spain. The participants gain the knowledge of the two legal systems and the two languages which they can use professionally.

Such programs exist in French-English, French-German, French-Italian and other versions.

The Saints Cyril and Methodius University Law School Justinianus I, participates in a network of legal studies of 18 law schools in the Balkan region. This program is mainly conducted in English. University American College Skopje (UACS) participates in a business graduate program of the “Resita Group”, that is a group consisting of Universities from: Macedonia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Slovenia, Croatia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, and Austria.

In early 2014, Macedonia concluded an agreement with the Organization of American States (OAS) to sponsor the studies at the St. Paul University in Ohrid for 15 students from the Americas. Many governments have agreed on similar programs, including direct exchanges. Memoranda of understanding (MOUs) of exchanges and scientific cooperation have been most recently concluded between the Saints Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje and the University Akdeniz in Turkey; and between the same University in Skopje with the Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel. UACS has bilateral agreements with an American university in Brussels (Vesalius University), East-Carolina University (USA), New University in Bulgaria, University Paris Dauphine, Gazi University in Ankara (highlighting exchanges of groups of architecture and design students), and several more universities. South East European University (SEEU) has bilateral agreements and MOUs with universities in the U.S., U.K., the Netherlands, Turkey, Albania etc. By joining a partnership with nine Western Balkan universities and ten EU universities, SEEU students and teachers now have access to the BASILEUS program (now BASILEUS V) – one of the main EU programs in the Balkans.

The University of Lorraine (France) has joined a Grand Region (GR) – a regional conglomerate of universities that spans: Sarre and Rheinland-Pfalz in Germany, Luxembourg, Wallonia (Belgium), and North Eastern France. This example indicates the possibility of broader regional collaboration. The University of Lorraine has also signed a bilateral agreement on exchanges with Kazakhstan, and established a Center for Chinese Studies Confucius in Nancy.

The Canadian Government is now launching its new International Education Strategy that includes a focus on recruiting students from seven priority markets: Brazil, China, India, Mexico, North America, the Middle East and Vietnam. The plan calls for doubling Canada’s international student population by 2022. The number of foreign students currently enrolled in Canada is 265,000. According to the Canadian Minister of International Trade,

Edward Fast, the Government of Canada sees international education as a key driver of jobs and prosperity in every region of Canada (International Educator, 2014).

The Russian Government is now introducing the possibility for its university graduates to go abroad for their master's degree or doctorate. This will apply to those students who plan to study at universities on The Times Higher Education List, the Jiao Tong or Symonds ranking list. Some 3000 students will receive scholarships over the next three years, according to Russia's Strategic Initiatives Agency (International Educator, 2014).

The U.S. Institute for International Education (IIE) has recently announced a new effort to increase the number of students from the U.S. studying abroad. The program called "Generation Study Abroad" aims to double the number of undergraduates going overseas annually by 2020 (Salisbury, 2014). George Mason University, Virginia, has accepted the challenge and set a new one, they want to quadruple the number of their students abroad.

In general, student mobility will increase throughout the next ten years, according to the British Council's, "The Future of the World Mobility of Students," published in October 2013. This report predicts that by 2024, 3.85 million students will seek higher education outside their own countries. The main beneficiaries of this trend will be the U.S. and the United Kingdom. The U.K. is a part of the EHEA. If the EHEA really works, it is likely to be the main beneficiary.

According to the OECD Report (July 2013), international student mobility is growing and changing its facet. The number of international students has reached 4.5 million (i.e. more than in the British Council's projections). The largest number of tertiary students are from China, India and South Korea, while Asian students count for 53% of all international students. Looking at receiving countries, the U.S. has still the largest number of foreign students, followed by the U.K., Germany, France, Canada, Japan, Russia and Spain. Australia, New Zealand, and Brazil are the new markets. The factors of choosing a country to study in are: the language of instruction, tuition fees and the cost of living, the government and immigration policies, other incentives (Report Education at a Glance, OECD, 2011). One of the tools to remove obstacles is to measure the problems, the support system and its impact on society – or the "mobility environment" (EU Mobility Scoreboard Report, 2014).

Prospects: How to Reach the EHEA?

“The new millennium, into which we move and which our children will inherit, confronts us with a bewildering mixture of promise and threat. On the one hand, we glimpse the promise of revolutionary advances in biomedicine, communications, information technology, alternative energy sources, new materials, automation and globalization; on the other hand, we contemplate the looming threats of balkanization, tribalism, terrorism, sectarianism, North-South inequalities, hunger, the intricate balance between population, resources and environment, the challenge of sustainable development and the relationship of all these to the future of traditional nation-states. And if the balance between promise and threat is not clear, what is clear is that the essential key – to human wellbeing in this daunting new world is knowledge” (The Glion Colloquium Declaration, 1999).

Today, only 14 years into the millennium, we may be confronted with a return to Cold War patterns in international relations, which, if the trend continues, could seriously affect the EHEA and global internationalization of education. The two parts of Europe may get isolated from each other, with the Bologna process being split into two clearly separate fields; The West, with some 4,000 institutions of higher learning and 20 million students; and The East, with some 6,000 institutions and 15.5 million students.

At this stage, it is still not the case. Many countries, not yet fully integrated but aspiring to integrate with the West, may find themselves in the excluded part. Macedonia is a case in point – as are some neighboring countries. While close to a number of EU countries, Macedonia maintains strong relations with some countries in the East. If Macedonia is to preserve its special position, it should definitely support the Bologna process in Europe as a whole.

Finding itself between the West and the East, Macedonia may become a bridge between the two. It is in Macedonia's interest to join the EU and, at the same time expand its educational exchanges with the former Yugoslav republics, regardless of their status in EU accession and also with: Albania, Turkey, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Israel, Jordan, and other Mediterranean countries. It is also in Macedonia's interest to increase its collaboration with the U.S.A. and Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Greece is in the EHEA but has not signed the Lisbon Recognition Convention. On the other hand, Australia, New Zealand and Israel are not in the EHEA but are the parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention. These are

special cases. Macedonia wants to have students and teachers from everywhere, and be able to send its students everywhere. This attitude defines the future strategy.

Another issue to be worked out is the issue of how to achieve the goal of 20% of all students to have spent at least a part of their studies abroad? It amounts to about 13,000 as compared with approximately 5,000 at present. How will states achieve balances between outgoing and incoming numbers of students per country? If Macedonia is to send 13,000 students abroad, it should be able to receive 13,000 foreign students in Macedonia. There should be a strategy on mobility as well as on other issues.

Frank Vanderbroecke, the President of the Flemish Government who was also in charge of education at the time of the Louvain-Louvain-la-Neuve Conference, wrote that a sequel to the Bologna process is necessary. In other words, some revision of different definitions, standards and goals (Khem, 2009). Without going that far, the Yerevan conference should look into improving the prospects of the EHEA in its present form. Unless there are some unexpected changes, most European ministers of education will be more inclined to proceed that way.

Having interviewed: graduate students; colleagues from several universities, including foreign ones and those officials involved in the exchanges, as well as some diplomats and political leaders; and, having looked at the available documents, writings and reports, we suggest a number of recommendations for future steps. Many issues discussed in this paper have been covered while some remain to be considered further.

Recommendations

R1. The existing Bologna process should be protected by the university community and governments and divorce itself from political infighting.

R2. Keep the standard of achievement as high as it already is.

R3. Mobility within the Bologna process should not count as immigration, if the participants are from the EHEA and not intending to immigrate to the host country.

R4. Diplomas and diploma supplements should be accepted in English or French without translation, as well as in any other official language of a country in the Area. Notarial or court approvals should not be required for all bona fide participants in the process. The principles of the Lisbon Convention should be implemented in the interest of the student.

R5. Countries with a higher frequency of participation in the mobility process should also negotiate and conclude bilateral agreements on the mutual recognition of diplomas. Regional agreements are a good practice too.

R6. Within the EHEA, state authorities should establish *digital passports for the use of students, teachers, researchers and administrators*. These should be uniform and contain basic personal documents, such as a: birth certificate (in its original language), diploma and diploma supplement, c.v. of the student, a document showing that the student has been accepted by the host university of an EHEA country, a bank statement, financial aid information and – if necessary, a visa document. Such a digital passport should include additional diplomas and diploma supplements as they are obtained and job appointments. This would entitle a student of country A to legally enter country B, and become a student there. It would be accepted within the whole Area.

R7. The visa system should be liberalized and simplified for the purposes of the bona fide participants in the process. Those intending to spend a year studying in an EHEA country should be accepted without a visa. For study periods longer than a year, the visa should be issued without any complex procedures, within a month. Instead of having to present a visa application with an inordinate amount of pages (the current situation for Macedonians trying to study abroad), the digital passport should be sufficient. The visa issuing authority should issue its visa in the real passport and the digital passport. The registration with state authorities in the host country should be done by the university administration of the host university.

R8. Financial aid and financial operations in the host country should also be simplified, in order not to obstruct the increase in student numbers. Financial aid vouchers, university students' and teachers' bank accounts and credit card systems should be further simplified and developed. In the case of grants or scholarships from governments, international organizations or companies, these should be made easily transferable within the EHEA. Banks should also use the digital passports as their primary source of information.

R9. Life-long education should be encouraged and the procedures should be developed, along the same lines as for international students. Somebody who, at his/her age of 65 who decides to study Turkish in a foreign country, should be treated as a regular part-time or full-time student.

R10. Foreign and domestic students should be able to compete on equal basis for scholarships, research grants, fellowships, assistantships, part-time jobs etc.

R11. Foreign teachers should have the same status as domestic teachers within the EHEA. Their years of service abroad should count towards their retirement in their own countries as well as in their host countries. This should apply to benefits of other kinds (vacation time, sabbaticals, official travel, etc.).

R12. The European Cultural Convention of 1954 should be implemented in creative ways. Initially, each country should open at least two cultural centers for the study of language, history and civilization of two countries in the Area. This could be done through bilateral agreements.

R13. Countries of the EHEA should encourage the study of languages of the EHEA, for cultural and practical reasons. For instance, the study of French should be encouraged in schools and at universities, not only because it is an official language of the Bologna process but also as somebody speaking French can study in France without tuition, get a European or an international organization job, etc. One can study in Russian not only in Russia but in Belarus, Ukraine, and some ten other countries, also without tuition at various universities. There is no tuition for foreign or domestic students in Norway or Finland, where one can study in English as well. International students also study: Chinese, Japanese, Arabic in addition to German, Spanish, Italian and many other languages. Within the EHEA, university graduates should know at least two languages in addition to their own.

R14. The Council of Europe should establish a central Office for University Exchanges. The Center should initially facilitate exchanges between students of EU and non-EU countries. As for the EU, it has a developed system of programs such as Erasmus +, Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius, Grundtvig, Youth in Action and Jean Monnet. Similar programs should be created elsewhere in the vast EHEA.

R15. Student standard-of-living issues should be reconsidered, especially since higher numbers of students are expected to travel. Student housing should be improved in many countries, including by governments and universities themselves. The Cité Universitaire in Paris is a good model as it combines the effort of the governments of many nations, the French Government and universities. Student restaurants are also needed, as well as medical facilities, insurance, sports centers, and cultural facilities.

R16. Student governments and foreign student participation in the work of university/faculty institutions is also a path to be followed. Many European countries already implement this system. NGOs, companies and other stakeholders should also participate – whether domestic or foreign.

R17. The European University Association gathers European universities and represents them. Students have their political or professional organizations. There are, literally, hundreds of organizations “that count”, many as consultative members of the ECOSOC, UNESCO, the European Council...European universities, as well as teachers, students, researchers and administrators should increase their participation in such bodies. Many Europeans and Higher Education Institutions from Europe are members of the U.S. National Association of Foreign Students Advisors (NAFSA) .

R18. Further contacts and collaboration between the EHEA and other areas are needed, for example, initiatives with the Asian Area of Higher Education or the Inter-American Area – so as to work together in the World/Global field.

In short, we may conclude that, having all these things in mind, the mobility of university students, teachers, researchers and administrators should be given new impetus in Yerevan in 2015. It is up to members of the Bologna Community to continue with the EHEA, which is a noble, practical and a very necessary endeavor.

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